

Murray History Advisory Board
October 26, 2010

Attendance: Kathy Romero, David Adams, Lee Brinton, Jay Bollwinkel
Mary Ann Kirk (staff)
Excused: Susan Wright

1. Minutes for July 20, 2010 were approved as written.
2. Mary Ann noted that she has held off on new board appointments and meetings for the past few months because the city is considering a new ordinance that eliminates district boundaries for board members and unifies term lengths. We currently have two vacancies in District #4 and #5 and Lee's term technically ended in August but he is continuing until things are clarified at the city level.
3. Mary Ann reviewed the handouts that were presented to the city council several months ago. It included the history of the board and its activities and data regarding historic buildings in Murray. It was interesting to note that 16% of historic structures on the original registry have been demolished. One of the oldest adobe homes in Murray located on Winchester was recently lost. It literally fell down. She also reviewed a summary of how six other communities approach historic preservation. Most are coordinated through city staff and cooperation with history organizations. Some cities have financed major restoration efforts through private, state, and federal grants and funding sources. Draper has an active independent history organization that identifies one project at a time and then goes after the funding for each. They are currently working on a project to preserve a historic home. Sometimes they move the building and find a use for it. One of their restored homes is being used as the Chamber of Commerce office. This might be an approach we could consider for small projects like the Freeze barn. Mary Ann pointed out Ogden's unique efforts to encourage upkeep and private ownership of historic homes. They provide revolving loans for projects like new roofs. They also purchase homes and then resale them with an agreement that the owner will rehab the home. This keeps older neighborhoods and affordable housing from deteriorating.

Lee said a 501 c3 foundation could be formed. He explained this was done in Murray but they did receive support from the school district for the accounting component. Mary Ann said a foundation has been formed for the performing arts center but they had to do all the legal and accounting efforts completely on their own. Without some technical support, it is hard to sustain it. Kathy said this is her concern. She wasn't sure the city was interested in preservation. She hasn't felt like they are willing to get behind preserving some of these important buildings that tell the story of our past. Jay felt the city council showed support at the presentation and didn't seem interested in questioning the whole philosophy of whether the city should be involved in preservation. He felt they were impressed with what had been done. Mary Ann felt they were more focused on the downtown master plan. Jay felt they understood the importance of significant buildings in this area. Board members agreed that we need to express and encourage passion for

preserving some of these buildings.

4. The Hoffman building was involved in a significant fire which was determined to be arson. Mary Ann said the city did take extra effort to fight the fire and keep it from spreading to the adjacent buildings to save it until we could determine its condition. She talked to state history and they said an intense fire with water can compromise the brick. The city consulting engineer looked at it and thought the only place where severe damage has occurred was in the northwest area which was already going to be demolished with a wrap around design for the performing arts center. He is going to provide a report on how the building would likely withstand the weather without a roof for several years. Jay said it could be a safety issue without a roof because the roof holds the walls together. Winter freeze elements can destroy the foundation. Kathy asked if the interior woodwork was gone. Mary Ann said the interior handcrafted woodwork was one of the most valuable historic elements of the building but it didn't know if it was completely destroyed. The board agreed the city should rely on the structural engineer's input and then trust the RDA (city council) to make a responsible decision. Mary Ann suggested that some people have expressed that this building is an eyesore. Board members noted that a vacant lot can also be an eyesore and this shouldn't be the reason for demolition. It should focus on the structural condition and costs to rehab. Lee asked if the city could use the money they were going to use on this building and focus it on the other historic buildings. Kathy asked how much money has been used to study this building. Mary Ann said that no money has been spent on studies or preservation and no money was set aside for rehab. The information we gathered to evaluate the cost to preserve the building several years ago was done internally with free assistance from other professional agencies such as the Utah Heritage Foundation. Everyone agreed that the city needs to invest and move something forward in this area.
5. Mary Ann reported that a labeling project grant has been completed at the museum. We have an opportunity to apply for another museum initiative that would provide training for our staff and create a new exhibit. She attended a museum conference that was very good.
6. Rowland Hall AP history students have expressed interest in working with us on researching buildings on the registry and putting them on our website. Mary Ann said the teacher felt this was a big project but Jay suggested that even if they could get our website started, that would be helpful.
7. Mary Ann attended a meeting for the Cottonwood Street Study. Most in attendance were home owners on Box Elder and Hanauer. There was concern expressed by the owners about how they would find another historic home in an area similar to where they were living for the same cost. Many of them want to live in a historic home. Mary Ann said this was a fair concern. Mary Ann also noted that the board had previously determined this area had lost much of its integrity and felt that this area would be a better area to allow height and density instead of going east of State Street. Mary Ann sent the UDOT consultants a list of homes that were on the local register in the area. There were only

four or five homes. She voiced her support at the meeting to consider a road that would enhance the potential adaptive reuse of the Nelson Sons Fish Feed building. This could become something similar to Gardner Village. Richard Nelson has expressed interest in preserving this building. The next meeting is on December 9. Jay Bollwinkel could not attend the October meeting but will try to make the one in December.

8. The final report and recommendations from the RLS survey was reviewed. Recommendations included additional surveys in the areas that were not completed, ILS surveys of important buildings or buildings that may be threatened with demolition, individual and district nominations for the National Registry with a potential update of our multiple property listing to go beyond 1950, educating the public with tours and publications, and adding all A buildings on our local registry. Mary Ann felt the A buildings should be added immediately as our first priority. We can then discuss next month what other projects if any we would like to proceed with. She didn't feel that updating the multiple property listing was critical right now because we have buildings built before 1950 that have not been added yet. She would like to get this done first. One of the recommendations suggested reviewing the zoning to make sure we maintain affordable housing stock by discouraging massive remodeling or replacement of smaller homes within historic districts.
9. Our next meeting will be on November 30 and then we will have no meeting in December.